

Other initiatives include the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Advanced Technology Program, enabling small high technology firms to develop pathbreaking technologies, and NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which helps small manufacturers apply performance-improving technologies needed to meet global competition. Two of the SBA's loan programs—the 7(a) and 504 loan programs—currently assist 2,000 high technology companies. And the SBA's ACE-Net initiative is especially designed to meet the needs of these dynamic high technology firms.

Because they give small firms a footing on which to build new ideas and innovative products, these efforts benefit not only the small firms themselves, but the entire American economy.

#### REGULATORY RELIEF

A pressing concern often identified by small businesses is unfairly burdensome regulation. My Administration is committed to reforming the system of Government regulations to make it more equitable for small companies. In 1996, I signed into law the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act, which strengthens requirements that Federal agencies consider and mitigate unfairly burdensome effects of their rules on small businesses and other small organizations. A small business ombudsmen and a new system of regulatory fairness boards, appointed in September 1996, give small firms new opportunities to participate in agency enforcement actions and policies. Because agencies can be challenged in court, they have gone to extra lengths to ensure that small business input is an integral part of their rulemaking processes.

Many agencies are conducting their own initiatives to reduce the regulatory burden. The SBA, for example, cut its regulations in half and rewrote the remaining requirements in plain English. All of these reforms help ensure that the Government maintains health, safety and other necessary standards without driving promising small companies out of business.

#### OPENING OVERSEAS MARKETS

Key in my Administration's strategy for economic growth are efforts to expand business access to new and growing markets abroad. I want to open trade in areas where American firms are leading—computer software, medical equipment, environmental technology. The information technology agreement we reached with 37 other nations in 1996 will eliminate tariffs and unshackle trade in computers, semiconductors, and telecommunications. This cut in tariffs on American products could lead to hundreds of thousands of jobs for our people.

Measures aimed at helping small firms expand into the global market have included an overhaul of the Government's export controls and reinvention of export assistance. These changes help ensure that our own Government is no longer the hurdle to

small businesses entering the international economy.

#### A 21ST CENTURY WORK FORCE

American business' most important resource is, of course, people. I am proud of my Administration's efforts to improve the lives and productivity of the American work force. We know that in this Information Age, we need a new social compact—a new understanding of the responsibilities of government, business, and every one of us to each other.

Education is certainly the most important investment we can make in people. We must invest in the skills of people if we are to have the best educated work force in the world in the 21st century. We're moving forward to connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000, and to raise standards so that every child can master the basics.

We're also training America's future entrepreneurs. The SBA, for example, has improved access to education and counseling by funding 19 new women's business centers and 15 U.S. export assistance centers nationwide. And we are encouraging businesses to continue their important contributions to job training. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 encourages employers to provide training by excluding income spent on education for employees from taxation.

We are taking steps to improve small business workers' access to employee benefits. Last year, I signed into law the Small Business Job Protection Act, which, among other things, makes it easier for small businesses to offer pension plans by creating a new small business 401(k) plan. We made it possible for more Americans to keep their pensions when they change jobs without having to wait before they can start saving at their new jobs. As many as 10 million Americans without pensions when the law was signed can now earn them because this law exists.

Given that small businesses have created more than 10 million new jobs in the last four years, they will be critical in the implementation of the welfare to work initiative. That means the SBA microloan and One-Stop Capital Shop programs will be uniquely positioned to take on the "work" component of this initiative. The work opportunity tax credit in the Balanced Budget Act is also designed as an incentive to encourage small firms, among others, to help move people from welfare to work.

A small business starts with one person's dream. Through devotion and hard work, dreams become reality. Our efforts for the small business community ensure that these modern American Dreams still have a chance to grow and flourish.

I want my Administration to be on the leading edge in working as a partner with the small business community. That is why an essential component of our job is to listen, to find out what works, and to go the extra mile

for America's entrepreneurial small business owners.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 5, 1998.

By unanimous consent, the message, together with the accompanying papers, was referred to the Committee on Small Business.

#### ¶39.28 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted—

To Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for today;

To Ms. CARSON, for today;

To Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, for today and balance of the week;

To Mr. MCNULTY, for today and balance of the week;

To Mr. SKAGGS, for today and balance of the week;

To Mr. BATEMAN, for today and balance of the week; and

To Mr. NEUMANN, for today and balance of the week.

And then,

#### ¶39.29 ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Mr. MCINNIS, at 10 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m., the House adjourned.

#### ¶39.30 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska: Committee on Resources. H.R. 1021. A bill to provide for a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands within the Routt National Forest in the State of Colorado (Rept. No. 105-506). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. DREIER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 419. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1872) to amend the Communications Satellite Act of 1962 to promote competition and privatization in satellite communications, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 105-507). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GOSS: Permanent Select Committee on the Intelligence. H.R. 3694. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1999 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. No. 105-508). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

#### ¶39.31 PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 5 of Rule X and clause 4 of Rule XXII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. HYDE (for himself, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. BRYANT, Mr. PEASE, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia):

H.R. 3789. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to enlarge Federal Court jurisdiction over purported class actions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THOMAS:

H.R. 3790. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the Library of Congress; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.